

From: ["Bryan, David" </O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE:GROUP \(FYDIBOHF23SPDLT\)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=DE67FD66319E475AA76B7FB0C64D64B5-BRYAN,DAVID>](mailto:Bryan.David@EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE:GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=DE67FD66319E475AA76B7FB0C64D64B5-BRYAN,DAVID)
To: ["R7 Daily Digest" <INBOX>](#)
CC:
Date: 9/29/2014 3:08:10 PM
Subject: OPA Daily Digest for 9/29/14

OPA Daily Digest for 9/29/14

Congressional Inquiries:

Sen. Roy Blunt (Mo.) – Email – 9/5/14: Deed restriction on contaminated property near the Missouri Electric Works site in Cape Girardeau. Due: 9/12/14. Contact: LaTonya Sanders, 7555 (open)

State Government Inquiries:

None

Press Inquiries:

Bloomberg BNA – Mark Wolski – 9/29/14: Questions about settlement with Griffin Pipe Products for air and water violations at its facility in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Contact: Chris Whitley, 7394 (closed)

Environmental Stories:

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - Fear of bird strikes factors into effort to solve landfill issues - 9/28/14 - Beyond radioactive waste, burning trash and dangerous chemicals, there's another risk that could hamper construction of a protective barrier between Bridgeton and West Lake landfills. Birds. http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/fear-of-bird-strikes-factors-into-effort-to-solve-landfill/article_0e3be008-3078-5d4a-a638-e3e032471944.html

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - Parents, health officials search for answers about sick kids - 9/29/14 - Now a state health report has singled out the 63043 ZIP code, which includes both schools, for its high rate of brain and nervous system cancers among children 17 and younger. http://www.stltoday.com/lifestyles/health-med-fit/health/parents-health-officials-search-for-answers-about-sick-kids/article_113fab08-43f8-5d6e-b2f0-6804feb8b9a4.html

Lincoln Journal-Star (Neb.) - Letter, 9/28: Can't trust EPA - 9/27/14 - I would like to address the letter to the editor from Karl Brooks, administrator, EPA Region 7 ("Rule wouldn't hurt farming," Sept. 21). I agree that our streams and waterways need some protection and some regulations, but it is hard for me to believe that the EPA will be an organization that is easy to work with. http://journalstar.com/news/opinion/mailbag/letter-can-t-trust-epa/article_747f67bc-eb9b-5d53-aca9-2237f7d5e106.html

Joplin Globe (Mo.) - Karl Brooks, guest columnist: Clean water benefits American agriculture, more - 9/28/14 - When Congress passed the Clean Water Act in 1972, it didn't just defend the mighty Mississippi or Missouri rivers from pollution. It also protected the smaller streams and wetlands that flow into rivers like the Meramec, Platte, Chariton,

Osage and St. Francis in Missouri. http://www.joplinglobe.com/opinion/article_f27f3680-45c4-11e4-8375-af57148eb88a.html

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - Brooks: Clean water serves American agriculture, businesses and community health - 9/27/14 - The comment process is enriched when we hear from landowners, the business community, farmers, scientists, conservationists, energy companies, states and local governments.

http://www.stltoday.com/news/opinion/mailbag/clean-water-serves-american-agriculture-businesses-and-community-health/article_b260a9a6-64d3-5b43-9602-ad0f99644182.html

Iowa City Press Citizen - EPA, DNR: Cheese Factory violated regulations for decade - 9/26/14 - Twin Counties Dairy LLC of Kalona violated a series of state-issued permit regulations during a roughly 10-year period before it closed, according to Iowa Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sources.

<http://www.press-citizen.com/story/news/local/2014/09/26/epa-dnr-cheese-factory-violated-regulations-decade/16281231/>

Springfield News Leader (Mo.) - Opinion: Don't constrain energy growth - 9/27/14 - Overall, the world needs more energy, not less. Whatever changes in the climate that are to come, humanity will be better prepared and more resilient if we are healthier, wealthier and wiser. Restricting our ability to progress in these areas is not a good solution.

<http://www.news-leader.com/story/opinion/contributors/2014/09/27/constrain-energy-growth/16369323/>

Des Moines Register - Letter: Renewable energy can be a win, win, win for Iowa - 9/28/14 - Thank you to Steve Lockard for laying out the economic benefits to Iowa's wind industry in the EPA's Clean Power Plan (Sept. 24). His column stated clearly how wind provides jobs, financial benefits to farmers and rural economies, and energy that cuts down on carbon emissions and water usage. <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/opinion/readers/2014/09/28/renewable-energy-win-iowa/16378827/>

NOTE: Paywall issues may keep you from seeing this article. Full text is included at the end of this email.

The Gazette, Cedar Rapids, Iowa - DNR, emergency responders prepare for spills and fires - 9/28/14 - More than 4,000 Iowa facilities reported storing large caches of hazardous chemicals last year. That list of "reportable" chemicals numbers to 500,000 — if stored in large enough quantities. <http://thegazette.com/subject/news/dnr-emergency-responders-prepare-for-spills-and-fires-20140928>

WNAX Yankton, S.D. - Farm Bureau Pleaded EPA Drops Appeal - 9/29/14 - The EPA will not appeal a federal ruling that favored a West Virginia poultry producer regarding farm run off. Nebraska Farm Bureau National Affairs Coordinator Jordan Dux says EPA was clearly in the wrong and the ruling and drop of the appeal is a big win for agriculture.

<http://wnax.com/news/180081-farm-bureau-pleaded-epa-drops-appeal/#sthash.kivuq4oG.dpuf>

Associated Press - New group to talk Missouri energy plan - 9/29/14 - Gov. Jay Nixon on Friday announced the names of more than 50 business, labor, education and energy leaders who will start work to hash out a plan for state energy use Oct. 1 at Washington University in St. Louis. http://www.bnd.com/2014/09/29/3427280_new-group-to-talk-missouri-energy.html

St. Louis Post-Dispatch - Corps may re-create Missouri River channel between island and St. Charles - 9/27/14 - A plan to re-create a side channel between the Missouri River shore and an island park could spur new riverside economic development just south of Interstate 70, city officials say. http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/stcharles/corps-may-re-create-missouri-river-channel-between-island-and/article_d7844ec4-0e1f-5c13-ad73-ffd40e6b2d68.html

EnergyWire - Mo., other states developing plans to shape energy futures outside EPA regs - 9/29/14 - Missouri is in the early stages of its most comprehensive energy planning effort in at least two decades. And it has nothing to do with U.S. EPA's proposal to regulate carbon dioxide emissions.

<http://www.eenews.net/energywire/2014/09/29/stories/1060006535>

Inside Climate - Big Business Climate Change Movement Grows in Size and Heft - 9/29/14 - The business presence at this year's Climate Week went well beyond the 'green bubble' that has long surrounded such climate advocacy. <http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20140929/big-business-climate-change-movement-grows-size-and-heft>

Omaha World-Herald - Willie Nelson, Neil Young lend their talents to Keystone XL fight - 9/27/14 - Music legends Willie Nelson and Neil Young delivered Saturday on a promise to comfort opponents of the Keystone XL pipeline while also pleasing a few project supporters who ventured into a crowded Nebraska farm field.

http://www.omaha.com/go/willie-nelson-neil-young-lend-their-talents-to-keystone-xl/article_c1ac3d34-4676-11e4-8524-001a4bcf6878.html

Blue Springs Examiner (Mo.) - Lynn Youngblood: One water for a thirsty world - 9/29/14 - This past week, I attended portions of a three-day conference, One Water Leadership Summit (OWLS), in which leaders from across the country shared their experiences controlling, manipulating, and cleaning water. <http://www.examiner.net/article/20140927/News/140929063>

The Hill - EPA chief: Don't believe hype about states resisting climate rules - 9/26/14 - Environmental Protection Agency chief Gina McCarthy said there is a "different" discussion going on behind closed doors about the administration's proposed carbon pollution rules than the one being broadcast. <http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/219061-epa-chief-dont-believe-hype-about-pushback-on-climate-rule>

ClimateWire - Wind power puts Iowa ahead in carbon emissions cuts - 9/26/14 - Iowa's adoption of wind energy is putting it ahead of other states in meeting carbon reduction goals proposed by U.S. EPA, according to the Des Moines Register. <http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/2014/09/26/stories/1060006475>

ClimateWire - A woman in the eye of the political storm over climate change - 9/26/14 - But why does it even matter what Judith Curry thinks? Because she is a tenured professor at a highly respected university and she has co-authored some prestigious scientific papers. And because she falls squarely within the climate skeptic camp but has some suggestions on climate action that are similar to the ideas floating around Washington, D.C. <http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/2014/09/26/stories/1060006489>

The Hill - Week ahead: EPA on the clock for climate, water rules - 9/29/14 - Coming off a week of events dedicated to fighting global warming, the administration is now hunkering down to finalize and promote policies that are the pillars of President Obama's climate legacy. <http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/219154-week-ahead-epa-on-the-clock-for-climate-water-rules>

Reuters - U.S. river freight system near breaking point as huge harvest looms - 9/26/14 - With a record U.S. harvest just coming in, the river transportation system that is at the heart of the nation's farm economy is overstrained by rising demand for shipping capacity, a low barge inventory, and a dilapidated lock system. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/26/us-usa-grains-barges-idUSKCN0HL1L120140926>

Politico - Bruce Braley, Joni Ernst tear into each other - 9/28/14 - When Iowa Democratic Senate candidate Bruce Braley said Sunday night that his opponent is in the pocket of the oil billionaire Koch brothers, Republican Joni Ernst responded that he is the one in the pocket of Tom Steyer, who she called "a California billionaire extreme environmentalist." <http://www.politico.com/story/2014/09/bruce-braley-joni-ernst-debate-2014-iowa-senate-elections-111409.html>

Environmental Health - Fish still contaminated with phased-out Scotchgard chemical - 9/26/14 - A persistent chemical formerly used in Scotchgard still contaminates most fish in U.S. rivers and the Great Lakes despite a phase-out a dozen years ago, a new federal study shows. <http://www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ehs/news/2014/sep/pfos-in-waters>

iStreet Research - EPA: reducing carbon pollution is our business - 9/28/14 - With the ongoing issues regarding climate change and the US Administration's commitment in helping to reducing greenhouse effect, the EPA or Environmental Protection Agency is now drafting the Clean Power Plan Act. <http://www.istreetresearch.com/epa-reducing-carbon-pollution-is-our-business/2511970/>

Hoosier Ag Today - New Ad Campaign Highlights Risks of Cutting American Renewable Fuel Production - 9/28/14 - With "the U.S. government risking American troops to protect Middle East oil interests," a new series of advertisements on radio, cable and online in the DC market tells the public and decision-makers that "the Renewable Fuel Standard could end our addiction to foreign oil." <http://www.hoosieragtoday.com/new-ad-campaign-highlights-risks-of-cutting-american-renewable-fuel-production/>

National Law Review - Credit Where Credit Is Due: Renewable Thermal Energy Heats Up - 9/26/14 - Using renewable fuels to heat and cool buildings has many virtues, but their use for this purpose is distressingly low. <http://www.natlawreview.com/article/credit-where-credit-due-renewable-thermal-energy-heats>

MIT News - How to make a "perfect" solar absorber | New system aims to harness the full spectrum of available solar radiation - 9/29/14 - The key to creating a material that would be ideal for converting solar energy to heat is tuning the material's spectrum of absorption just right. <https://newsoffice.mit.edu/2014/perfect-solar-cell-0929>

Clean Technica - Solar To Be Primary Energy Source By 2050? IEA Says Yes - 9/29/14 - Solar will be the industrial world's primary energy source by the year 2050, according to a recent report from the International Energy Agency — presented at EU PVSEC's closing event. <http://cleantechnica.com/2014/09/29/solar-primary-energy-source-2050-iea-says-yes/>

Wall Street Journal - Federal Clean-Energy Loan Guarantees Go Begging - 9/28/14 - Up for grabs: \$40 billion in loan guarantees. That's what Peter Davidson, the head of the U.S. Energy Department's loan office, has available for companies developing certain kinds of clean-energy technologies, including a big chunk earmarked for projects that reduce pollution in the coal, oil and natural-gas industries. <http://online.wsj.com/articles/federal-clean-energy-loan-guarantees-go-begging-1411937791>
NOTE: Paywall issues may keep you from seeing this article. Full text is included at the end of this email.

Wall Street Journal - How to Cut Residential Energy Use - 9/28/14 - It's a nearly universal maxim in the energy world: Efficiency is a vast, barely tapped resource that can be unlocked with the right policies and incentives. The trick is finding the key. <http://online.wsj.com/articles/how-to-cut-residential-energy-use-1411937802>
NOTE: Paywall issues may keep you from seeing this article. Full text is included at the end of this email.

Triple Pundit - New Metrics 2014: 3 Ways Companies Bridge Consumer Environmental Concern and Action - 9/29/14 - According to the 2014 Greendex Study, 61 percent of consumers say they are 'very concerned' about environmental problems. Unfortunately, this concern isn't translating into concrete actions and behaviors, according to the study that spans six years, 18 countries and 18,000 respondents. <http://www.triplepundit.com/2014/09/new-metrics-2014-3-ways-companies-bridge-consumer-environmental-concern-action/>

Phys.org - Smart, ecofriendly new battery to solve environmental problems - 9/29/14 - Present-day lithium batteries are efficient but involve a range of resource and environmental problems. Using materials from alfalfa (lucerne seed) and pine resin and a clever recycling strategy, Uppsala researchers have now come up with a highly interesting alternative. Their study will be presented soon in the scientific journal ChemSusChem. <http://phys.org/news/2014-09-smart-ecofriendly-battery-problems.html>

The Federalist - The Radical Environmental Agenda Should Be Rejected, Even If Global Warming Is Real - 9/29/14 - I believe that protecting the environment is both a good thing and a legitimate function of government. But I'm rational. So while I want limits on pollution, such policies should be determined by cost-benefit analysis. <http://thefederalist.com/2014/09/29/the-radical-environmental-agenda-should-be-rejected-even-if-global-warming-is-real/>

Washington Examiner - Lax EPA asbestos study endangered public health, wasted millions, IG says - 9/27/14 - Environmental Protection Agency officials spent millions of tax dollars over a dozen years on an alternative asbestos removal study that "threatened human health," according to a new report. <http://washingtonexaminer.com/lax-epa-asbestos-study-endangered-public-health-wasted-millions-ig-says/article/2554055>

Canada Journal - Gina McCarthy: EPA chief says to expect 'changes' in final climate rule - 9/28/14 - Federal EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy says most of the conversation surrounding the proposed Clean Power Plan has been positive although the critics seem to be making a lot of noise. <http://canadajournal.net/science/gina-mccarthy-epa-chief-says-to-expect-changes-in-final-climate-rule-15792-2014/>

E&E News PM - EPA chief vows to make ozone call by Dec. 1 based on public health - 9/26/14 - U.S. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy today pledged that the agency will hit a Dec. 1 deadline to decide whether to tighten the federal ozone standard. <http://www.eenews.net/eenewspm/2014/09/26/stories/1060006525>

Greenwire - State foes of climate proposal are 'rolling up their sleeves' -- McCarthy - 9/26/14 - Even states that publicly came out swinging against U.S. EPA's existing power plant proposal for greenhouse gases are preparing to implement it, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy said today. <http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2014/09/26/stories/1060006521>

ClimateWire - McCarthy on natural gas -- EPA is 'not in the business of picking winners and losers' - 9/26/14 - Natural gas has been a game changer for U.S. power systems, and the Obama administration has every intention of harnessing its potential to lower carbon emissions and grow the economy, U.S. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy said yesterday. <http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/2014/09/26/stories/1060006490>

Greenwire - RFS combatants make final arguments in White House meetings - 9/26/14 - Interest groups and companies with a stake in the renewable fuel industry have been lining up to visit the White House in the past three weeks as officials wrap up their review of a contentious rule setting the nation's 2014 mandates for corn ethanol advanced biofuels.

<http://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2014/09/26/stories/1060006516>

Press Releases:

Link to all R7 press releases: <http://go.usa.gov/Qx5>

Griffin Pipe Products Facility in Council Bluffs, Iowa Agrees to Reduce Lead Emissions and Pay a Penalty to Resolve Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act Violations. – 9/29/14 – Contact: Ben Washburn, 7364

Fact Sheets:

Link to all R7 fact sheets: <http://www.epa.gov/region7/factsheets>

None

Upcoming Administrator/RA Events:

* New additions noted with an asterisk

9/30/14 – Strong Cities Strong Communities Update with Mayor Francis Slay, St. Louis, Mo. Contact: Charlie Foley, 7710

9/30/14 – Midwest Energy Policy Conference, St. Louis, Mo. Contact: LaTonya Sanders, 7555

10/1/14 – Meeting with Jason Klumb, Regional Administrator for GSA, Regional Office. Contact: Julia Cacho, 7071

10/2/14 – Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities, Des Moines, Iowa. Contact: Becky Weber, 7487

10/4/14 – Iowa Sierra Club Annual Meeting, Des Moines, Iowa. Contact: Karen Flournoy, 7782

10/3/14 – Iowa Water Challenges Outreach Event with Brody Middle School, Des Moines, Iowa. Contact: Kris Lancaster, 7557

10/9/14 – Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce Energy & Environmental Roundtable and Reception, Kansas City, Mo. Contact: Dave Bryan, 7433

10/10/14 – Nebraska State Bar Association, La Vista, Neb. Contact: Julia Cacho, 7071

***10/21-22/14** – EPA Lean Summit, Washington, D.C. Contact: Becky Weber, 7487

10/30/14 – COOP Exercise, Kansas City, Mo. Contact: Chris Taylor, 7736

11/12/14 – Native American Heritage Event Discussion on “Climate Change and Adaptation in Indian Country, Regional Office. Contact: Alex Owutaka, 7584

11/18/14 – Region 7 Small Business Environmental Assistance Providers, Regional Office. Contact: Gary Bertram, 7533

DRA:

10/1/14 – Meeting with Jason Klumb, Regional Administrator for GSA, Regional Office. Contact: Julia Cacho, 7071

10/7/14 - Employee Appreciation Event, Regional Office contact: Monica Espinosa, 7541

10/30/14 – COOP Exercise, Kansas City, Mo. Contact: Chris Taylor, 7736

11/12/14 – Native American Heritage Event Discussion on “Climate Change and Adaptation in Indian Country, Regional Office. Contact: Alex Owutaka, 7584

RA/Immediate Office

None

Other Events**AWMD**

None

CNSL

None

ECO/EJ

9/30/14 - 10/2/14 - Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem Solving Project Officer Training, Washington, D.C. Contact: Corazzin, 7429

9/30/14 – National EJ Coordinator’s Meeting in Washington, D.C. Contact: Tamara Freeman, 7094

10/5-8/14 – Superfund 101 Training, Chicago, Illinois. Contact: A. Moses, 7649

10/19-22/14 – Senior Enforcement Managers Meeting, Washington, D.C., Contact: D. Singletary, x7373

ENSV

None

PLMG

None

RA/OPA

9/29-30/14 - Healthy Schools Outreach, Missouri School Plant Managers' Association Conference, Four Seasons, Lake of the Ozarks, Mo. Contact: Kathleen Fenton, 7874 and Harry Diesel, 7382

SUPR

10/7/14 – Greater St. Louis Sub-Area Committee, Industry Day Workshop for spill response strategies on the lower Missouri River, St. Charles, Mo. – Contact: Jeff Weatherford 636-326-4720

10/22/14 – Public Availability Session to discuss remedial action and the Five Year Review for the Parkview Well Site, Grand Island, Neb. Contact: Brad Vann, 7611

WWPD

9/30-10/2/14 – North Central Region Water Network's Water Resource Management Conference, Bloomington, Minn. Contact: Damon Frizzell, 7560

10/8-9/14 – 2014 National CAFO Roundtable, Des Moines, Iowa. Contact: Karen Flournoy, 7782

10/15-16/14 – Big River Task Force Meeting with Other State and Federal Agencies, Farmington, Mo. Contact: Jeannette Schafer, 7297

10/20-21/14 – Hypoxia Task Force Meeting, Alton, Ill. Contact: Karen Flournoy, 7782

11/3-6/14 – EPA Tribal 106 Coordinators Meeting, Washington, DC. Contact: Heather Duncan, 7640

Des Moines Register –

Letter: Renewable energy can be a win, win, win for Iowa

By Rev. Susan Guy, Iowa Interfaith Power & Light, Letter to the Editor

1:42 a.m. CDT September 28, 2014

Thank you to Steve Lockard for laying out the economic benefits to Iowa's wind industry in the EPA's Clean Power Plan (Sept. 24). His column stated clearly how wind provides jobs, financial benefits to farmers and rural economies, and energy that cuts down on carbon emissions and water usage.

Coming on the heels of the largest climate march in history in New York City, it seems fitting to connect the dots. Increasing the use of energy efficiency and renewable energy resources while limiting the amount of carbon pollution that we emit in the U.S. from fossil fuels is a win-win-win for jobs, the economy and climate.

In Iowa we have seen first-hand the economic impact of devastating storms, floods and droughts and the real physical and emotional toll that this has on our neighbors around the state. By further increasing our use of wind energy and energy efficiency measures and ramping up other renewables such as solar, we can mitigate the effects of climate change and act in the interest of the common good.

Federal Clean-Energy Loan Guarantees Go Begging

Energy Department Hopes to Drum Up Interest, but Companies Are Wary

By AMY HARDER

Sept. 28, 2014 4:56 p.m. ET

0 COMMENTS

Up for grabs: \$40 billion in loan guarantees.

That's what Peter Davidson, the head of the U.S. Energy Department's loan office, has available for companies developing certain kinds of clean-energy technologies, including a big chunk earmarked for projects that reduce pollution in the coal, oil and natural-gas industries.

Whether he can drum up much interest in the funding, however, remains to be seen.

The executive director of the loan office since May 2013, Mr. Davidson is seeking to revive a loan program that was accused of squandering hundreds of millions in taxpayer money by backing green-energy failures such as Solyndra, the solar startup that filed for bankruptcy in 2011 after getting a \$535 million loan.

He says that despite Washington's focus on Solyndra and a few other failures, the loan program was largely successful during President Barack Obama's first term. Buoyed by stimulus money, it backed more than two dozen projects that have begun or are scheduled to begin soon. Of the roughly \$32.5 billion that was lent, \$838 million—less than 3%—went to four companies that eventually filed for bankruptcy, according to Mr. Davidson

"When you compare that to a commercial bank, it's a very good number," he says.

Stirring to Life?

SolarReserve is cited by many as one of the successes. The California company says millions of gallons of molten salt heated by the sun will begin generating electricity for some 75,000 homes all day and night in Nevada by year's end. The project addresses a major problem with renewable-energy sources: how to store and use the energy when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing.

SolarReserve credits the \$737 million Energy Department loan it received in September 2011 for making the project possible.

"It was very integral to our success," Chief Executive Officer Kevin Smith says.

Established in 2005, the loan program aims to help companies bring to market promising but unproven technologies. A portfolio funded by stimulus money that offered borrowers better terms was added in 2009 amid the financial crisis, spurring a flurry of loan activity.

But when the stimulus-funded portfolio expired in September 2011 and former director Jonathan Silver resigned amid the firestorm over Solyndra, the loan office went mostly silent.

Since 2011, it has closed just one loan—\$6.5 billion to a nuclear plant that first received conditional approval more than four years ago—and it is working to close another, worth \$1.8 billion. In July it offered a \$150 million conditional loan to Cape Wind, a long-delayed wind farm off the coast of Massachusetts.

"After [the stimulus program] ended, we decided to take the time and be diligent about identifying which technologies would be truly catalytic and replicable before we issued new solicitations for our remaining authority," Mr. Davidson says.

Although Mr. Davidson has money for a range of clean-energy technologies, a big focus for him now is soliciting applications from companies working on fossil-fuel-related technologies, including those that capture carbon emissions.

The administration has ordered the Energy Department to devote \$8 billion of its remaining loan authority to those types of projects, betting that new rules limiting carbon emissions from power plants will spur investment in renewable energy and pollution-cutting technology.

"I think we're going to be using up the \$8 billion for the fossil authority relatively soon," says Mr. Davidson.

Joseph Aldy, a Harvard University professor who worked on energy and climate issues for Mr. Obama during his first two years in office, isn't so sure.

"I don't think there is a long line" of companies applying for the loans, he says, citing the high up-front fees and loan conditions that the federal government requires of applicants.

Doubts Linger

Some companies such as Sargas Texas LLC, which is seeking to build low-emissions natural-gas power plants, and aluminum maker Alcoa Inc., which is investing \$600 million in lightweight vehicles, say they are applying for loan guarantees, but many other firms express reservations.

Mike Durham, CEO of Advanced Emissions Solutions, Inc., a Colorado-based maker of pollution-control technology for the coal-fired power sector, says he has no plans to seek debt financing because he doesn't think clean-coal technology is ready to be deployed on a mass scale.

Robert Johnsen, CEO of Primus Green Energy, a New Jersey-based developer of alternative-fuel technology, says the loan program's application fees, which range from \$50,000 to \$350,000, are too high.

"For a lottery ticket, that's a lot of money," says Mr. Johnsen, who hopes to use private funding to build a plant next year.

Electric-car maker Tesla Motors Inc., which received a \$465 million loan guarantee in 2010 and paid it off in 2013 (nine years early), has no plans to apply for another one, partly because of the lingering politics of Solyndra.

"Along with other beneficiaries of the program, we became political whipping boys for everything that was wrong with the Obama administration," says Diarmuid O'Connell, Tesla's vice president of business and corporate development. "There is political overhead that comes with loans such as this."

Wall Street Journal

How to Cut Residential Energy Use

Recent Efforts by Utilities Offer a Glimpse at What Programs Work Best With Consumers

By MICHAEL TOTTY

Sept. 28, 2014 4:56 p.m. ET

It's a nearly universal maxim in the energy world: Efficiency is a vast, barely tapped resource that can be unlocked with the right policies and incentives.

The trick is finding the key.

Some efficiency programs have failed to get the desired effects, at least as cheaply as their proponents had hoped. Some even backfire, causing people to use more energy.

"Not all energy-efficiency programs deliver," says Lucas Davis, an associate professor at the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley. "But for me, this means that we need to design them better."

The payoff could be billions of dollars in energy savings. A recent report by McKinsey & Co. says that up to 20% of U.S. residential energy use can be cut by a few changes in consumer behavior, from slight changes in thermostat adjustments to shorter showers. "There are lots of attractive options for efficiency" that wouldn't greatly inconvenience consumers but that aren't being widely adopted, says Humayun Tai, a senior partner and a leader of McKinsey's energy practice.

So what are the best ways to get consumers on board? A pair of approaches have shown they can deliver results.

We're in This Together

One fairly modest new technique has proved remarkably effective: telling consumers how their energy use compares with that of their neighbors.

Several times a year, households in one program receive a two-page sheet that compares their energy use with that of similar homes and "efficient" homes in the area. It also includes tips for saving energy, such as turning off the water heater while on vacation.

The program, run by Opower Inc. of Arlington, Va., for more than 90 utilities, has reduced energy use for participating utilities by 1.8% to 3%. That's not a huge amount, but the results are consistent, and they come at little cost—about three cents for each kilowatt-hour saved. (The cost is crucial, because utilities see efficiency in part as a way to meet future energy demand at a lower cost than building new plants.)

"You can have a program that has small effects but that's not very costly," says Hunt Allcott, an assistant professor of economics at New York University who has conducted several studies of the Opower program. "It's a lot easier to implement and cheaper to implement" than some other programs.

The approach works, Dr. Allcott says, because "it makes people feel like part of a community. If you have a program that guilted people into conserving, you probably wouldn't want to run that program."

Make It Easier

Rebates are another way to get people to save energy, by encouraging them to purchase energy-efficient appliances or light bulbs, which typically are more expensive than less efficient options.

But the hassle of rebates, which often involve clipping a coupon and waiting for a check, is enough to keep many people from considering more-efficient products.

So some efficiency programs are making it easier for consumers—giving them discounts directly and letting retailers or distributors handle the rebate paperwork.

Efficiency Vermont, an arm of the nonprofit Vermont Energy Investment Corp., offers technical advice and incentives aimed at getting consumers and businesses to reduce their energy use. It has run a rebate program in Vermont for energy-efficient light bulbs since 2000, with funding from an energy-efficiency surcharge on electric bills in the state.

For most of that time, it offered traditional mail-in rebates that covered about half the cost of the bulbs.

Beginning in 2012, Efficiency Vermont did away with those mail-in rebates. Consumers and businesses now simply pay a discounted price for energy-efficient bulbs, and Efficiency Vermont pays retailers or distributors who file for rebates for the difference between that price and the full price.

The results are dramatic: Sales of LED bulbs to consumers jumped to about 117,000 in 2013 from about 5,000 in 2012. Sales to commercial customers rose to about 96,000 in 2013 from about 74,000 in 2012 and 18,000 in 2011.

Efficiency Vermont says its portfolio of programs spent 4.1 cents per kilowatt-hour saved in 2013, compared with an electricity supply cost in the state of 8.4 cents per kilowatt-hour.

What Not to Do

There's also something to be learned from programs that haven't worked. In 2009, Mexico adopted an ambitious "cash for coolers" program, which gave nearly two million households subsidies to help them replace older refrigerators and air conditioners with new, more efficient models.

Over the two years of the program, according to a study of utility bills by Berkeley's Mr. Davis and others, refrigerator replacement reduced electricity consumption for the participating households by about 8%—a significant amount, but only a quarter of the savings predicted before the program started.

One reason was that the original estimates assumed households would replace much older, much less efficient models. In fact, most of the replaced refrigerators were less than 12 years old and already were somewhat more efficient than older models. Consumers also took advantage of the program to trade up to refrigerators that were somewhat larger and had more features.

Worse, the air-conditioner program resulted in higher energy use. People used the new air conditioners more, partly because they were willing to keep their houses cooler since they knew the new models used less energy—what economists call the "rebound" effect.

So, while the program reached an enormous number of households and produced large overall savings, the reduction in energy use was far smaller than expected and came at a large cost: about 29 cents a kilowatt-hour for the energy saved. By comparison, energy-efficiency programs by U.S. electric utilities spend an average of about 3.3 cents per kilowatt-hour saved.

Mr. Davis says a few changes in the program could have made it more effective.

It could have excluded air conditioners, which don't offer the same potential efficiency gains that refrigerators do and are more vulnerable to the rebound effect. It also could have required replacement refrigerators to be even more efficient. The result would have been a smaller program, with lower overall savings. But the cost of cutting each ton of carbon-dioxide emissions would have been lower.

"It is challenging to design these programs so that they're cost-effective," Mr. Davis says. "Free riders are going to be a problem. The rebound effect, though not as big as some critics say, is real. And the savings are going to be less than predicted."